

REMARKS

The instant application currently stands allowed. However, in conversations with Examiner Richard Bemben on May 12 and May 18, 2010, the Examiner raised the issue as to the potential relevance of U.S. Pat. No. 6,094,217 to Nishimura to the claims currently of record. Examiner Bemben indicated that the potential issue could be obviated by the filing of a statement of common ownership. Accordingly, Applicant hereby states that the instant application and U.S. Pat. No. 6,094,217 were, at the time the invention was made, owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to, the same person.

Examiner Interview

In a sequence of telephone Interviews with Examiner Bemben, Applicant has approved the Examiner's offer to amend the claims so that the application would be put in condition for allowance. The most recent telephone Interviews occurred on May 12 and May 18, 2010, the last in which Applicants' approval for the incorporation of claim 8 into claims 1 and 9 was conveyed. In addition, Examiner Bemben required Applicants to file a statement of common ownership of the instant application and the Nishimura Patent No. 6,094,217. This reply presents Applicants' statement. This constitutes Applicants' statement of the substance of the most recent Interviews.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the present application remains in condition for allowance. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding requirement, and as such, the present application remains in condition for allowance.

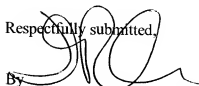
Prompt and favorable consideration of this reply is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Paul T. Sewell, Registration No. 61,784, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,



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